SUBJECT MATTER: Governor's Proposed FY 23 Budget Adjustments H.B. #5037 AN ACT ADJUSTING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUMENDING June 30, 2023

Independent Living Centers must have 1 million dollars increase to Properly Fund CT's Five Independent Living Centers at $1.75 Million

My name is Marilyn Wenzel, and I am a board member for 1 of the 5 Independent Living Centers, the Center for Disability Rights located in West Haven CT.

I am here to ask the legislators to properly fund the five Centers for Independent Living at 1.75 million dollars increasing CT's funding by 1 million dollars.

I became involved in the Center for Disability Right after being invited to by another board member and consumer about four years ago. I started to participate in the monthly support group at Center for Disability Rights called Helping Each Other Succeed. While it provided us with a chance to socially connect with others with disabilities, we were able to be educated and discuss disability related topics and resources. For example, we had a speaker from Agency on Aging, or we discussed legislative bills that might affect people with disabilities.

When Covid 19 hit obviously it prevented us from meeting in person, but Center for Disability Rights still found ways to assist their consumers. They used Cares Act Funds to assist myself and other consumers with tablets or other technology so we can. stay connected socially and so the board of directors could continue to meet. In addition, just recently Center for Disability Rights held vaccination clinics and provided consumers and members with covid tests and N95 masks including myself. I ask again that you please increase the funding to the 5 Independent Living Centers by 1 million dollars so they can be properly funded at 1.75 million dollars so the Independent Living Centers can continue to support people with disabilities in their communities like myself and give their employees a livable wage.

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